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ALPHABET SOUP

An EPA Region 4 pesticides information update to inform regulators, organizations, and the interested public about the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), sustainable agriculture projects, and FIFRA registration actions and policy. Editor: Lora Lee Schroeder, Life Scientist

E-mail: schroeder.lora@epa.gov

Walt Disney World Resort is New EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Partner

Walt Disney World Resort has joined a growing number of organizations who have made a commitment to develop and implement a reduced risk integrated pest management strategy. Organizations who join the EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) and make this commitment are given an EPA contact person who assists them in understanding EPA regulations and environmental goals.

Lora Lee Schroeder of the Region 4 Pesticide Program staff has been designated as the EPA liaison for Walt Disney World and will work with Jim Warnecke in the Pest Management Office, a business unit of Disney's Horticulture and Environmental Initiatives, to develop a successful strategy for managing pests throughout the property.

EPA believes that Walt Disney World Resort is a microcosm of our urban environments and its participation offers EPA a wonderful opportunity to reach out to a huge audience in delivering valuable environmental messages.

Walt Disney World Resort had already made a strong commitment to managing pests using the safest pest management tools available. The goal of the Disney Pest Management Unit is to meet the environmental, safety, economic, and show quality challenges of pest control at the Walt Disney World Resort. It uses an integrated pest management (IPM) approach to manage pests that incorporates environmentally friendly methods, including biological, mechanical, cultural, genetic, sanitation, and chemical means to provide a safe and healthy environment.

WHAT IS IPM?

According to EPA, IPM is the coordinated use of pest and environmental information with available pest control methods to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means, and with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment.

In addition to its routine IPM program on its many properties, the Pest Management Unit participates in a number of other "value added" activities which promote good environmental stewardship such as its Dr. L. Bug presentations, showcasing the value of beneficial insects, plastics recycling, and the use of ornamentals that require low inputs such as fertilizer and water.

The EPA liaison has recently facilitated a meeting of EPA, Walt Disney World Resort and a representative of USDA, Center for Medical, Agricultural & Veterinary Entomology, located in Gainesville, Florida. Dr. Rick Brenner of the USDA has developed an ARC-View computer software application which could assist Walt Disney World Resort in targeting areas which present pest management challenges. Focusing pest management only on those areas will further reduce the application of pesticides in locations which have little or no need for control. Dr. Brenner has worked extensively with Department of Defense facilities to reduce their dependency on pesticide applications.

The area managers of Disney's Pest Management Office attended a demonstration by Dr. Brenner at Walt Disney World Resort on March 7, 2001. Dr. Brenner demonstrated the potential of the system by plotting the Disney Pest Management Office, key features of the building, combined with real world pest data.

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Kentucky State University "Third Thursday Thing" Teaches Sustainability for Small Farms.

"The Third Thursday Thing" initiated in 1997 has proven to be a big success. The series of workshops sponsored by Kentucky State University (KSU) have included over 50 subject areas, among them organic, alternative, and traditional methods of sustainable production of grain, tobacco, vegetables, fruits and nuts, livestock, poultry, aquaculture, bees, ostriches and alternative animals, pawpaw, ostriches, herbs and beneficial insects. Production issues have included farm safety, water quality, cover crops, soil quality and tilth, and environmentally friendly agricultural production.

Nearly 85 people regularly attend the monthly workshops with over 600 attending throughout the year. This project is reaching a large number of minority farmers, women, organic producers, and non-traditional farmers.

Some of the tangible results of the "Third Thursday Thing" workshops are as follows:

1. Between 15-20 minority farmers are actively involved in the training workshops. These farmers were not previously actively involved in Extension activities.

2. Extension Agents and Small Farm Extension paraprofessionals indicate an increased knowledge of sustainable agriculture and sustainable production techniques. They indicate a heightened understanding and respect for organic and reduced input production techniques, and are better able to respond to marketing and production questions for these alternative production methods.

3. The sustainable agriculture training sessions have included training on Kentucky's legislated Water Quality Act which must be implemented by 2002.

4. Four farm families have developed a cooperative, similar to community supported agriculture, for marketing their organic vegetables.

5. The use of cover crops, compost, manure, legumes and green manures to increase soil nitrogen has been presented often. Over 30 farmers have implemented these systems on a few acres or rows of tomatoes.

The "Third Thursday Thing" is paid for with a grant from the USDA - Southern SARE-PDP (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Professional Development Program).

For more information about the "Third Thursday Thing" contact Dr. Marion Simon, State Specialist for Small Farm and Part-time farmers with KSU at: <msimon@gwmail.kysu.edu>

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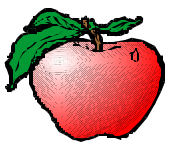
Gerber Works with Southern Apple Growers to Promote IPM.



Ever wonder if mating disruption and other "softer" pest management methods can work in southern apple growing regions? For the past three years, researchers in North Carolina have been testing the efficacy of such techniques as pheromone-mating disruption, biopesticides, insect growth regulators, strobilurin fungicides, and development and validation of insect and disease forecasting models. This year was the trial run for growers in North Carolina, a number of whom began using these techniques on a commercial scale.

Southern Appalachian Apple IPM Project Formed. In response to potential change in uses resulting from implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) a number of growers and others in the industry formed the Southern Appalachian Apple IPM Project. The Project is housed at North Carolina State University's Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center in Fletcher, North Carolina. Its principal goal is to help growers adopt "reduced risk" pest management techniques. Inspiration for the project came in part from Gerber Products Company's intent to reduce OP inputs in North Carolina apples in 2000. Gerber is the nation's leading baby food manufacturer and an important buyer of North Carolina apples.

Western North Carolina Apple Growers Eliminate OP Insecticides for Gerber. Says John Aselage, Southern Regional Research Coordinator for Gerber, "We've asked all our North Carolina growers to eliminate OP insecticides and reduce their use of other chemicals, including some fungicides, many of which may be targeted by the EPA in the future."

Apple IPM a Challenge in Southeast. A "soft" approach to apple pest management is a challenge in the

hot and humid southeast, a region where as many as 10 arthropod pests require direct management every year and disease severity is particularly high. The principal pests that usually require treatment with OP insecticides include codling moth, oriental fruit moth , plum curculio and tufted apple budmoth. This year, a number of these pests are being controlled using alternative approaches. Says Kenny Barnwell, North Carolina apple grower, "We're losing OPs that we've relied on for many years, and it's just a matter of time before we'll have to switch to these new control methods. Although a 'softer' program is more expensive than our traditional spray program, I decided to try it on some of my acreage so that I get more comfortable using it. I had good success with it this year."

On 700 acres of North Carolina apples grown for Gerber, OP insecticides were completely eliminated. Instead growers used mating disruption and reduced-risk materials such as Confirm (tebufenozide) and SpinTor. Because these tools have a more narrow spectrum of activity, growers relied heavily on weekly scouting reports and degree day calculations to determine if and when to spray. Says North Carolina apple grower, Richard Staton, "I decided early this season to try and eliminate OPs in all my orchards. These newer techniques are certainly trickier but they work. I'm real impressed with the quality of my fruit."

Rain was heavy late in the season and pressure from summer diseases, such as bitter rot and sooty blotch, was particularly intense. A number of growers were able to maintain control of the summer diseases with two new strobilurin fungicides, Flint and/or Sovran, which were used in place of late season sprays.

First Year Success Due, in Part, to Acceptance of Some Insect Damage. According to Jim Walgenbach, North Carolina State University entomologist, the program's achievements this first year were due largely to the ability of the newer technologies to effectively control targeted pests (i.e., codling moth, OFM, and leafrollers), and Gerber's willingness to accept certain types of damage for which there are not yet OP replacements, such as PC. Populations of beneficial insects flourished in almost all orchards using the program in 2000. However, there were a number of "new insect pests that appeared in some orchards, including the comstock mealybug. The long-term challenge will be to devise alternative management strategies for those pests previously controlled with broad-spectrum insecticides. "Just as the OPs suppress many beneficial insect populations, they also suppress many pests that we previously considered minor or sporadic. The trick is to recognize and devise solutions for these new pest problems before they become major problems."

These first year results stem from the vision and commitment of individual growers, all of whom were willing to take a potentially costly risk and experiment with new technology. Independent crop consultants and university research and extension personnel were also pivotal in providing on-the-ground technical support. Financial assistance was provided by Gerber Products Company, 3M Company (developers of sprayable pheromone mating disruption technology) and Novartis (manufacturer of Flint).

Apple IPM Project to Expand in 2001 to Entire Southern Appalachian Region. The Project recently received a grant in support of its implementation efforts from the USDA Pest Management Alternatives Program. The Project's focus in 2001 will include expanding the most successful aspects of the project to the entire Southern Appalachian Region, including Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina, and in adapting reduced risk techniques to the production of fresh market fruit.

(Article contributed by Jennifer Curtis, Consultant to Gerber Products Company)

Note: EPA Region 4 is supporting a related research project being conducted by Dr. Jim Walgenbach of North Carolina State University on apples under a Regional Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP) grant.

Gerber Products is a PESP Partner with EPA. Their liaison with EPA is Sherry Glick of EPA Headquarters.

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Eastern Peach Pest Management Transition Strategy Meeting Held in Atlanta.

A major step took place in December 2000 when key representatives of the Eastern United States stone fruit industry came together for two days to begin development of a transition strategy for stone fruits (primarily peaches). Agencies and organizations represented were the United States Department of Agriculture, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the University of Florida, Clemson University, the University of Georgia, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, Pennsylvania State University, Rutgers University, the Georgia Commodity Commission for Peaches, the Georgia Peach Council, the South Carolina Peach Council, the Agriculture Policy Center. Dr. Dan Horton of the University of Georgia presented the workshop participants with a draft strategy for peach transition. Lengthy discussions centered around emerging pest problems such as mites and scale because of the loss of methyl parathion. Other important issues were how to manage resistance development to both old and new pesticides. A disease issue of concern was the potential loss of Mycoshield, which is used to control bacterial spot on peaches. According to the participants, loss of Mycoshield would be devastating to the peach industry.

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NEWS AROUND THE REGION

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Region 4 Pesticides Section Gains New Expertise The Pesticides Section is pleased to announce the hiring of four new employees in the past several months.

Richard Colbert: Richard is from the small town of Blackshear, Georgia. He holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Environmental Geology from Valdosta State University.

Chris Plymale: Chris is originally from Upstate New York where he received his Bachelors of Science Degree in Geology from State University of New York. Chris obtained his Masters Degree in Hydrogeology from the University of Toledo in Ohio. Following completion of his studies, Chris worked with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and as a hydrogeologist for a environmental consulting firm.

Mark Bean: Mark grew up on a farm in Alabama. He graduated from Auburn University with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Integrated Pest Management. Mark spent the next six years applying agricultural and residential pesticides before embarking on a career change to environmental engineering and assessment for 10 years. In 1999 Mark started a soil amendments injection business to aid homeowners in drought relief for their lawns.

Joan Davis: Joan received her Masters Degree in entomology from Michigan State University and her Bachelors Degree in biology at Ohio Northern University. After she completed her studies she worked as an Army entomologist for three years and as an environmental health scientist with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR).

Long-time State Regulator Dies Suddenly. Robert McCarty, Director of the Plant Industry Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture, passed away October 26, 2000. He will be greatly missed.

Note: Contributions to the new feature "News Around the Region" would be appreciated. News about others should be verified with the individual concerned prior to submission for accuracy and appropriateness. We are interested in items such as biographies of new inspectors or other new hires, special events, and recognitions. Alphabet Soup is mailed to all pesticide inspectors in Region 4 in addition to other Region 4 partners and stakeholders.

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EPA HEADQUARTERS:

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Diazinon Registrants Agree to Significant Use Reduction and Use Deletions. Technical registrants Makhteshim-Agan and Syngenta Crop Protection Inc. formalized an agreement in December to eliminate indoor use and more than 20 agricultural uses of the organophosphate insecticide diazinon within the next several months. Retail sales of indoor use products must end by December 2002. Also, production of end use products for non-agricultural outdoor uses will end in 2003, while production of technical diazinon for these uses will be reduced by 25 percent in 2002 and 50 percent in 2003. Outdoor use, non-agricultural products left on retailer shelves as of December 2004 will be repurchased by Makhteshim and Syngenta. These actions will reduce diazinon usage by about 75 percent, or some 11 million pounds. The actions will result in significant risk reduction from residential exposure and exposure to non-target organisms, as well as reduce the amount of diazinon contamination. After execution of this agreement, only agricultural, restricted uses will remain for diazinon. Information about the diazinon agreement is available on EPA web site at <www.epa.gov/pesticides/op/diazinon.htm> (Mark Wilhite, EPA Headquarters).

New Fire Ant Bait Registered by EPA. The pesticide fipronil is now registered as a fire ant bait under the trade name, "Chipco Brand 61442A fipronil insecticide" and is labeled for use on home lawns, golf courses, commercial and recreational turf and sod farms. This product has a very low percentage of active ingredient (0.00015 percent), and a low maximum application rate of 0.00009 pounds active ingredient per acre per year. This product is expected to displace the organophosphates, chlorpyrifos and diazinon. It will be applied both as a broadcast treatment and a mound treatment (Ann Sibold, EPA Headquarters).

Starlink Registration Canceled by Aventis.

Background: StarLink is a genetically modified corn seed that was only registered for use in animal feed but which was found in some human food (taco shells). On October 12, 2000, Stephen Johnson, EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Pesticides announced that Aventis, at the strong urging of the Environmental protection Agency, was canceling the registration of StarLink Corn. This means that Starlink corn can no longer be planted for any agricultural purpose. The agreement will ensure that in the future no new StarLink corn will be grown and none will find its way into processed foods like taco shells.

The voluntary agreement represented the fastest tool available to EPA for quickly removing StarLink corn from being planted for any agricultural uses.

EPA does not have any evidence that food containing StarLink corn will cause any allergic reaction in people, and the agency believes the risks, if any, are extremely low.

EPA Scientific Advisory Panel Considers StarLink. On November 28, 2000, the Agency convened a meeting of the Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) , EPA's external panel of independent scientific experts, to consider the potential allergenicity, sensitization and possible human exposure to StarLink corn.

The SAP concluded, based on available information, that there is a "medium likelihood" that StarLink protein is a potential allergen and that given the low levels of StarLink in the U.S. diet, there is a "low probability" of allergenicity in the population exposed to the corn. The panel recommended as its highest priority that individuals who claim to have experienced adverse effects from StarLink corn consumption be studied as soon as possible to determine whether StarLink was the source of the reactions.

The SAP additionally recommended : 1) evaluating new data to determine what effect processing has on StarLink protein residues in processed food; 2) review of new and existing analytical methods for measuring levels of StarLink protein in processed foods; and 3) continued focused monitoring of the food supply to determine whether

residues of StarLink corn are present. EPA has already taken steps to act on each of the recommendations of the SAP.

For more information about the SAP recommendations visit the following Web site: <www.epa.gov/scipoly/sap/#November.>

Note: Web sites listed in this information update do not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. EPA. These sites are listed for your information and convenience.

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!!! ATTENTION !!! PLEASE COMMENT

EPA's Draft Public Involvement Policy Summary

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a Draft 2000 Public Involvement Policy on December 28, 2000 and is seeking public comments on the Policy through April 27, 2001. The Policy will provide guidance and direction to EPA officials on effective means to involve the public in its regulatory and program decisions.

The purposes of the Policy are to:

strengthen EPA's commitment to early and meaningful public involvement;

ensure that environmental decisions are made with an understanding of the interest and concerns of affected people and entities;

promote the use of a wide variety of techniques to create opportunities for public involvement in Agency decisions; and establish clear and effective procedures for conducting public involvement activities in EPA's decision-making processes.

When final, the Policy will apply to all EPA programs, including such activities as rulemaking for significant regulations, permit issuance or modification, selection of plans for cleanup of hazardous waste sites, and other significant policy decisions. The Policy will not replace public participation requirements established by existing laws or regulations, but will supplement those requirements and enable EPA to implement them in the most effective ways.

All EPA programs and regional offices will implement the Policy when it is finalized. In the interim, EPA will be applying the Policy as internal guidance. EPA is soliciting comment on how best to encourage states, tribes and local governments that implement delegated programs to adopt similar policies.

The new Draft Policy is based on an earlier policy issued in 1981 that was never fully implemented. The new Policy parallels the old one, except that it addresses many changes that have occurred since 1981. These include: EPA's additional responsibilities under new statutes, regulations and Executive Orders; new and expanded public participation techniques; new options for public involvement through the Internet; EPA's emphasis on achieving compliance through partnerships, technical assistance, and public access to information; increased capacity of states, tribes and local governments to carry out delegated programs; and new government-wide administrative procedures and public involvement requirements.

View the Draft Policy at: http://www.epa.gov/stakeholders/policy.htm. Call Loretta Schumacher at 202-260-3096 for printed copies or request e-mail copies from kahn.lisa@epa.gov. EPA invites your comments sent to stakeholders@epa.gov or by mail to Patricia Bonner, USEPA - Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Mail Code 1807, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20460.

COMMENTS BY THE EDITOR

Note: The February 2000 edition of Alphabet Soup was one of the top five to ten downloaded documents for the period of March to May of 2000 from the Region 4 Air Division Web Page.

To view an electronic version of Alphabet Soup visit the Region 4 web site at: http:www.epa.gov/region4/air/pesticides/newslett.htm

Readers are encouraged to submit comments and suggestions for improving the newsletter. To submit comments or information for Alphabet Soup please contact:

Lora Lee Schroeder
AIR/PESTICIDES SECTION
U.S. EPA / REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GA 30303-8960

schroeder.lora@epa.gov
ph: 404-562-9015